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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, instructional developers have ccnfronted the following dilemmas: (1) motivation through coercion versus motivation through reward; (2) systems approaches versus intuition; and (3) incremental change versus fundamental change. A more pragmatic approach to institutional change should attempt to: (1) be user centered; (2) provide formal structures within which clients can generate plans; (3) create an environment receptive to change; (4) restructure other systems to accommodate change; and (5) create the role of instructional advocate. This monograph discusses each of these strategies. (EMH)

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INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IN CONTEXT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL
INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT

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Instructional developers often view their role more narrowly than they rightfully should if they truly accept the general systems orientation instructional development has been assigned by definition.

Certainly, we all were taught, and have accepted, the admonition to "understand the complex interrelationships that exist within a system and to relate to the parts wholisticly." However, operationalizing that concept is another matter. How does one actually practice that advice? This paper will attempt to answer that question by looking at the larger context of Instructional Development and by proposing strategies developers may use to assist in the self renewal of educational institutions.

A PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Values and philosophy provide a structural grid for most decision making. Many developers, nevertheless, do not include this suprastructure as a relevant part of their system of interest. The prevailing winds of development blow infrequently from the quarter of philosophical and ethical concern. Yet, to ignore the philosophical basis of a change strategy is to place the whole experiment on an unstable base. Using McGregor's theory, x and y, as a simple case in point, one discovers how the philosophy a developer holds regarding people--his client--colors his choice of renewal strategy.

> Are individuals viewed as having an inherent dislike for work (theory x) or are they perceived as viewing physical and mental effort as natural and enjoyable? (theory y)
>
> Must people be coerced or directed, and threatened with punishment to get jobs done (theory x) or may they exercise self direction based on achievement rewards? (theory y).

> Do the vast majority of individuals wish to avoid responsibility and seek only security (theory x) or are they highly imaginative and creative seeking the opportunity to assume responsibility and reach a greater potential? (theory y)[1]

Little imagination is needed to discover that either philosophical base embodied in theory x or y would produce entirely different strategies for changing an institution, or that no philosophical base may result in a vacilating inconsistant change management posture.

The first block in the strategy for institutional renewal then, is that of establishing a philosophical basis--a premis position--as a developer. This author has found success and satisfaction with a premise based on theory y.

- work is as natural as play.
- given proper motivation man can self-direct toward organization objectives.
- Self actualization and self esteem are powerful motivators.
- Under proper conditions individuals will seek responsibility (thus more work)
- creativity and imagination are abundant and profusely distributed in the population (waiting to be freed?)[2]

All subsequent development activities proceed from these positions.

Another philosophical launch point is one dealing with method. Systems or non-systems--that is the question. Many of us are intuits in systems clothing. We enjoy the security of tight developmental models and move from needs assessment to objectives to criterion item selection, through the flow network with ease, and placidly select our media and perform prototype testing. But how much <u>real</u> committment to cybernetic principles is there? As a philosophical principle, what method do we espouse, intuitism or systems? This author believes as does Ryan (1969), the system exists for a purpose. "The interrelatedness of the parts into a unified whole is to facilitate and optimize accomplishment of the purpose."[3]

Stronger committment to this philosophical element will indeed self select certain renewal strategies and reject others. The principles of wholeness and control when operationalized would cause a developer to identify relationships among organizational structural elements and work (control) for greater synergy[4] to achieve efficiency in the systems operation.

Instructional developers with this basic commitment often find themselves doing work which is not prescribed by the neat boxes and slender vectors of a development model. A considerable portion of their time is spent taking care of certain sub components of the organizational whole whose interactions with other parts require they receive attention. Work on the Space Committee of an institution, writing educational specifications for proposed new construction of learning stations on campus, pioneering new directions for dissertations or masters thesis, thereby opening up this type of research for potential application to the redesign of departmental course offerings, are examples of this philosophical tenet in operation. These sub parts do interact with other sub elements and only by addressing them and manipulating their interrelationships with other parts will the promise of systems thinking be realized.

A third philosophical plank in the developer's platform may concern the view he/she has of innovation and change. Does the instructional developer view his role as one of the perpetrating an institution, generally preserving traditional roles, rules and regulations or is it viewed as one of transformation? Should change be brought about conservatively or radically? Is the instructional developer to be partner or provocateur? Are the "links" forged by the developers to span people, departments or institutions? Interlinkages or intralinkages?

As a premise for innovation, this writer has chosen to adopt a set of less limiting assumptions. Placing the traditional and the innovative on

the same intellectual footing. Traditional programs should require as strong a rationale for continuation as should innovations for adoption. "Can do" is a dominat theme. "Can do" has proven a powerful philosophical basis for innovation.

Many other elements could be cited as further evidence that establishing a firm philosophical basis is, indeed, a critical first step in bringing about institutional renewal. However, let us now move on and examine a number of strategies which evolve from the value premises already described.

STRATEGIES FOR INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL

While some behavioral scientists view the application of change strategies from a perspective of conflict negotiation and crisis intervention, this author is fortunate to work in an environment of collaboration which Benne (1969) suggests should be treated as a significant "achievement within a context of conflicting interests and orientations."[5]

Assumptions underlying the change strategies proposed in this paper reflect the author's views that institutional renewal can be a positive sum game where win-lose definitions no longer apply for participants in the interaction. Even when resources are scarce and competition for them is keen, many of the resources in the pie are non-consumables which may be shared by the contestants. In this game no one loses. The strategies which follow have proven successful in bringing about renewal at one University. They were sponsored by a faculty development division with very limited resources and a low campus profile. The strategies listed are consistent with many identified by Havelock (1973) and represent somewhat of a diagonal slice across the latter's four change perspectives of:

1. Research development and diffusion
2. Social interaction
3. Problem solving
4. Linkage[6]

Strategy #1

Adopt a "user" orientation[7] (let the user add the eggs). Developers may encourage institutional renewal by placing the user, his client, firmly in focus at the center of his stratagem target. Instructional developers are seldom very opaque. The typical client quickly spots an orientation that is not user centered. Instructional Development centers which are pre-occupied with either justifying their own importance or disseminating products outside their own institution have difficulty gaining the trust and support of clients on campus and infrequently prove successful in bringing about any meaningful change. They are not viewed as an important service available to the faculty. To implement this strategy the developer should:

A. Maintain a low profile.

B. Assign credit for successful projects to the faculty member rather than giving the development center the claim to fame.

C. Assume the larger portion of responsibility for those occasional failures, even when in reality the client deserves it.

D. Promote faculty initiative (don't sit back and wait for them to come, but provide a matrix of incentives which may cause them to initiate an idea).

E. Maintain involvement of the faculty client through the design, development and evaluation phase of their project.

F. Help the user become more aware of his problems: don't impose your view of perceived problems.

Strategy #2

Require formal planning of the client and provide a structure which facilitates the planning process[8] (develop road maps for successful travels).

Poets, historians, wildlife managers, and educators see instruction as an art form and view their role of applying paint to canvas as a personal expression of creativity. This frame of reference could place them at loggerheads with an instructional developer who is committed to a philosophy of systems applications. The question might be raised, "How does one persuade

the teacher/artist to self-initiate a 'scientific' approach to self or course improvement?" More than ninety-one mini-grants and twenty-four faculty development grants awarded to faculty members at Utah State University provide evidence that an appropriate answer is "incentives". Teacher/artists and teacher/scientists from every department on campus have responded to required planning when this was accompanied by a meaningful incentive. The following suggestions may assist the developer to implement this strategy.

1. Adopt a generic systems model which is general enough to cover most campus contingencies.

2. Don't flaunt the systems approach (the client who finds systems thinking motivational may benefit from knowing you are applying sequential components. Others may be repelled by them.)

3. Tie incentives to required model components. (The faculty might be informed: If you are willing to identify the problem you are trying to solve and describe the specific results you intend to elicit; how you wish to determine whether you indeed obtained them or not; the instructional development center will provide release time, technical assistance, materials, publicity, or money to help you succeed. Pry with the power of a pittance!!

4. Let the user set the tone of planning. Use jargon and/or procedures with which he/she can identify. A generic systems approach is flexible and may be applied in an unusual variety of ways. The developer should be dogmatic about ends and catholic about means.

5. Encourage the faculty client to use information in making decisions. Quantitative procedures and formative evaluation design provide this information to the client. A developer who skillfully teaches the client to view evaluation in this light will encounter much less resistance.

6. Remember planning for change is your problem. You need the client's cooperation and assistance--but don't expect him to shoulder the burden.

Strategy #3

Create an environment which is receptive to innovation.

Social interaction models for innovation suggest the considerable importance the developer must place on creating a receptive environment.[9] Research suggests the developer should occupy a central position in a network of formal and informal social relationships.

Informal campus opinion leaders have considerable influence in establishing a climate for instructional development. This author has spent much time cultivating positive relationships on campus with these individuals; as a result there is presently a large measure of informal support for instructional development and a positive body of opinion regarding teaching improvement efforts.

Person to person contact is very important in influencing individuals with strong opinions and those who initially establish a posture of opposition.[10] Programs must be established which provide opportunities for this face to face contact and dialogue.

The following suggestions may provide ways for implementing this strategy:

1. Tie your instructional development unit organizationally to campus agencies which allow you to "move in the middle," Too close an affiliation with a College of Education or Audio Visual Service may place the potential developer outside the mainstream of campus social interaction networks, especially for potential clients who are in the "pure" and applied science disciplines.

2. Build diverse and varied relationships across a wide variety of departments and people.

3. Know and get to know your opposition. Dialogue followed by genuine efforts of assistance may change him/her to a supporter.

4. Reserve the right to fail!! Remain an eternal experiment.[11] An ongoing experiment viewed as an organic part of the University by participants and observers will promote risk taking and innovation.

5. Engage the faculty where they are!! Design various levels of entry to your services which match the varied levels of sophistication in instructional skill held by different professors seeking assistance.

6. Establish a visable capability to provide relevant resources upon request.[12] The developer must become a linkage agent - one which can appropriately interpret the faculty client's problem, and link that problem into a network of relevant resources. Be they other people, materials, procedures, or information.

7. Be willing to listen to new ideas.[13] Openness is a prerequisite for establishing a climate for innovation. Communicate both through formal and informal networks, your willingness to help and your talent for listening.

8. Reward effort: every institution has non-consumables which may be used over and over again to reward faculty initiatives; recognition; self-fulfillment; resource trade-offs; personal pride; increased opportunity; all represent rewards which cost no money. Consumable rewards such as grants, stipends and promotion may also be used.

Strategy #4

Restructure other system components. Instructional development requires interaction among a number of components of the campus instructional system. A simple revision in a Biology or History course may place heavy pressure on other indirectly related campus agencies. A faculty member who develops a new approach and requires students to view a video cassette as part of an assignment in a large class may impact:

1. The schedule of A.V. Services
2. The number of playback units available
3. The availability of the electronic equipment repairman
4. The Space Committee's deliberations on whether to equip buildings with closed circuit video hook ups.
5. The department heads budgeting for video software.
6. The Librarians concern that his staff is taking on an instructional role with no compensation from the department who is easing its own role in instruction through theuse of technology.
7. The students ill feelings that there are no feedback mechanisms to evaluate teaching effectiveness.
8. Faculty peer opinion that T.V. instruction reduces quality and substance in the discipline area.

Although only a few potential points of impact are listed for only one hypothetical instructional decision, it becomes obvious that the instructional developer must move judiciously across a broad number of components of the total system to effect positive change in one component.

Suggested are the following:

1. Attempt to provide instructional input into:
   a. deliberations concerning the use of space on campus.
   b. equipment use, regulations purchase and maintenance.
   c. Faculty evaluation procedures.
   d. Scheduling decisions
   e. Campus wide curriculum discussions
   f. Educational policy making
   g. Instructional resource allocation.
2. Don't ask permission (unless absolutely necessary); you have a good deal of autonomy as a college professor. As an information purveyor and an advice seeker, you have probably never stretched your perogatives to their limit. Check with those directly or indirectly affected by your action without placing them in a position to refuse.

   Remember, most gate keepers in campus agencies feel that nothing can be done for the first time.[14]

Strategy #5

Create the role of instructional advocate.

An Instructional Advocate has the universal virtue of an ombudsman, the cross disciplinary access of a central administrator, the potential rapport of a faculty collegue, and the societal approval of Ministers,Priests, or Rabbis--ordained to be in charge of institutional morality. Who isn't in favor of improved instruction, yet who really carries the responsibility for doing something about it?

To implement this strategy, the Instructional Developer should avoid undue attention, cherish diversity, mind his own home, and keep it in order, and otherwise use previous suggestions in this paper. But all of this is more probable if administrators and faculty on campus accept advocacy in support of better instruction. Some suggestions follow:

1. Develop a campus organ to publish and disseminate programs and ideas to improve teaching.

2. Create a "center"; a physical presence on campus; which speaks in favor of greater emphasis on good teaching.

3. Obtain public support of instructional improvement by administrators and opinions leaders among the faculty. (Fiscal support is recognized in the strongest type).

4. Gain outside recognition and approval of the validity and effectiveness of your instructional development effort.

5. Keep your office academically acceptable, and intellectually sophisticated to a level approved by your clientele.

6. Produce!!! Do what you say you do. If you were indicted in a court of law for doing what you claimed you were doing, would you be found guilty?

If none of these suggestions work, turn this paper over to the blank side and proceed to write out a letter of resignation - you may be the problem!!!

FOOTNOTES

[1]Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise, McGraw Hill, New York, 1960.

[2]Ibid.

[3]T. Antoinette Ryan, "Analysis of the Systems Approach" - A Systems Approach to Learning Environments, Zalatime & Sleeman, MEDED Projects, Inc. Roselle, New Jersey, 1975.

[4]A contruct where the whole is greater than the sum of the interacting parts.

[5]K.D. Benne, W.G. Bennis, and R. Chin, "Planning Change in America", in Bennis, W.G., K.D. Benne, and R. Chin, The Planning of Change (New York: Holt Rinehart, and Winston), 1969.

[6]Donald G. Havelock, Training for Change Agents (Ann Arbor: Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge), 1973.

[7]Ibid, p. 9.

[8]Ibid, p. 15.

[9]Paul R. Mort,"Students in Educational Innovator from the Institute of Administrative Research", in Miles Mathew B. (ed.) Innovative in Education, New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University 1964.

[10]Havelock, op. cit. p. 21.

[11]Robert T. Halfman, Factors for Change, Occasional Paper No. 11 of the Educational Research Center, Cambridge, Mass. The Mass Institute of Technology, 1972.

[12]Havelock, op cit. p. 25

[13]Havelock op cit. p. 32

[14]Halfman, op cit. p. 2.